

The Church of God his Dwelling-Place.

6

BEING THE
S U B S T A N C E
OF A
S E R M O N,

Preached at the Opening
OF
Albion - Chapel,
IN
ALBION - STREET, LEEDS,

On the 25th of September, 1796.

By the Rev. THOMAS M'KAINE, V. D. M.

LEEDS.

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i.

A SERMON, &c.

PSALM cxxxii. 14.

This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell, for I have desired it.

THIS, together with the preceding and following Psalms, from the beginning of the cxx. to the cxxxiv. inclusive, are called Songs of Degrees, (i. e.) Ascensions, because sung with a high voice.

In this psalm, in which my text lies, we find David deeply engaged in prayer to God, that he would take care of the ark, ver. 1. Lord remember, &c. here he pleads with God to remember his afflictions, and take pity upon him: just so it is with those under the New Testament, who have the Lord's cause near at heart. When there is a decay in religion, or should God threaten to remove the gospel candlestick, then the Lord's dear people are much moved, and they often sigh, and cry before the Lord in secret, Lord, remember thy church and people in their deep distress, ver. 2. How he sware unto the Lord, &c. ver. 3. Surely I will not come into the tabernacle of thy house, ver. 4. I will not give sleep to mine eyes. O what did David feel when he uttered these words? Surely as a stranger does not meddle with their joy, no more can he know their sorrow. O how different was David from us, he would not come into his bed until he had taken care for the ark; but we in our day can sleep whole nights, and weeks,

months, and even years, with very little thought about either ark, Christ, heaven, or hell ; surely it would appear by our conduct, for actions speak louder than words, that we had found out an easier way to heaven than either patriarchs, prophets, or apostles did.

What do you think if faithful Abraham was to look up and behold the faithless, doubting, staggering professors of our day ? Would he not gently upbraid us, think you ? Was patient Job ; weeping Jeremiah ; honest, praying Daniel ; self-denying Paul ; and penitent, weeping David, all to return again upon the stage of existence, surely they would, with one voice, agree that we were impatient, dry-eyed, unfaithful, restraining-prayer, self-allowing, hard hearted, formal professors indeed. When did we know what it was to have a faith's-view of precious Christ ? Surely if one were to ask us when we saw the King ? many of us might reply, in the words of Queen Esther to the servant of Modcai, Esther iv. 11. I have not seen the King, the Lord of Hosts, these thirty days ; and can you rest in such a state as this ? if you can, I must say it is a bad sign, it is a sign these words are like to overtake you, which you have in Jer. ix. 21. for death is come up into our windows. To be distressed in soul is a sore trial indeed, but to be in a careless, cold, dead, barren state, is much worse ; it is one of the most awful of all the dispensations of the Almighty — to be let alone.

Ephraim is joined to his idols, *let him alone*. Hos. iv. 17. Believe me, God was more kind to Lazarus, who was laid all over with sores, than he was to Dives, who was surrounded with health and wealth, as the world calls it, for he weaned the one from earth to himself, while he used that most awful of all dispensations out of hell to Dives, — he let him alone. O what words, or rather thunder-bolts are these — *Let him alone* !

It is the lot of the Lord's dear people, in general, to be much afflicted; it is a part of the legacy Christ has left them; in the world they shall have tribulation, John xvi. 33. It is a mark of our heavenly Father's love towards his dear children, whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, &c. Heb. xii. 6. Compare with Rev. iii. 19. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. And who more beloved than David, and who had more afflictions. He is called the man according to God's own heart, 1. Sam. xiii. xiv. in some respects what God would have him to be; and yet behold how great were his troubles in his kingdom, and in his family. But why do I speak of David, surely a greater than David is here, namely the Spiritual David, the Lord Jesus Christ. Who was the Father's well-beloved Son, and rejoiced before him, before all worlds. Prov. viii. 25, 26, 27, 30. Who was more afflicted than he? his whole life was one continued scene of sorrows and afflictions; his visage was marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men. Isaiah lli. 14. A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Chap. llii. 3. Hark, O my soul! what voice is that, that sounds such an alarm in mine ears—is it fancy, or do I really hear my blessed Jesus by faith, uttering the astonishing words, enough to pierce the heart of stone,—Eli, Eli, lama Sabachthani. My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me! O Christian, all this, and much more, precious Christ endured for thee; surely it is both our duty and our privilege to love him, and live to his praise.

The more we are enabled, by divine grace, to do this, the more of heaven we shall have, even here below, and be enabled to shew before men and angels what it is to be christians indeed. But let us not expect to go to heaven on a bed of roses—no, there is a great deal of dross about us, and nothing will do to purge it away but furnace work; and sometimes one furnace after another,

another; and sometimes the furnace has to be heated seven times more than usual; what then, the form of the fourth will be with you, and loose your bands of lust and pride, envy, hatred, and malice; and having Jesus with you, you shall walk even through the fire and feel no harm, Dan. iii. 25. You shall lose nothing but your dross in the fire, and you will be much better without it. Chear up, then, my fellow brethren, we may have a rough road, but it is a high road, and we have a good home to go to at last; and that word which you have in Mat. xxv. 34. —Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. That one word will make amends for all our trouble and toil; and then with Joseph, Genesis xli. 51. God hath made me forget all the evils that my brethren did to me; it is just so with David now, once he had weeping nights, but joy came in the morning, Ps. xxx. 5. Though his eyes were debarred from sleep, and his eye-lids from slumber, ver. 4. yet now he sleeps safe in precious Christ. ver. 13. for the Lord hath chosen Zion. Zion signifieth a heap, tomb, looking-glasses, or drought. It was a fort in Jerusalem, and David took this strong hold, 2 Sam. v. 7. and it was called the city of David. Now mark how this verse preceding my text runs; it runs thus, For the Lord hath chosen Zion; blessed be God for that, that God chose Zion, a heap of sinners, a heap of sinful dust and ashes; consigned in a tomb, tied and bound with the chain of our sins, in darkness, without water, without light, having no hope, and without God in the world, Eph. ii. 12. A land of drought where no man dwelt, but dead sinners, who were cast out into the open field, polluted in thy blood, Ezek. xvi. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. Mark this chapter, I pray you, and consider it well; it is a lively description of the inhabitants of Zion while they were in a natural state, carnal, sold under sin.—You see it is here said, the

Lord

Lord chose Zion: We never make choice of God until he first reveals it to us that he hath chosen us; these are our dear Lord's own words. John xv. 16. Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever you should ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. Moreover, God the Father hath made choice of Zion in Christ, before the foundation of the world, Eph. i. 4. The whole is a wonderful chapter indeed, and if God is pleased to give you eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand, that God hath chosen Zion, and as he hath chosen, so he hath desired it for his habitation.

The Lord hath chosen Zion: he hath desired it for his habitation. My dearly beloved in the Lord, as God hath chosen Zion, so I believe God hath chosen Albion Chapel, (for so is the name of the Chapel) and is a word that comes of Albis Rupibus, and is the ancient name given to Great Britian, called so from its white rocks: and as God hath chosen, and desired it for his habitation, so he is able and will make, and call many in this place, new creatures, and call them by his grace. Make them white rocks, give them the white stone, and the new name; feed them with the hidden manna, set their feet upon the rock of eternal ages, even Jesus Christ. Psal. xl. 2. Put a new song into your mouths, and establish your goings. Our blessed Lord Christ, has promised to build his Zion, his Albion, his Church, upon himself. Matt. xvi. 18. Upon this rock will I build my Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. And why? because the Lord dwells there, he hath desired it. Moses saw a bush burning, and it was not consumed. Exod. iii. 2. Because the Lord was in it; many times hath the bush been on fire, not a tall cedar, nor a lofty fir tree, but a poor mean low thorny bush on fire, and was not consumed; many are the

the fires of trials and bloody persecutions that the Church has gone through, and yet it never was, nor ever will be consumed ; the reason is, God dwells in it, God hath desired it. And our sweet, dear, and blessed Jesus desired, yea, even delighted to dwell with the sons of men. Prov. viii. 31. Yea, he desired to tabernacle here upon earth, to suffer cold and hunger, to be weary, to live a life of sorrows and afflictions, and at last to die that shameful, painful, and accursed death of the cross, and all this he desired. Moreover, his desires were vehement desires, great, strong desires, ardent, longing desires. Pause here, O my soul, view attentively with wonder and admiration, that wonderful and most affectionate expression of my dear Lord, when he knew that his last solemn scene of sufferings were just at hand, his whole heart and soul was set upon the work, so that he heartily desired it might be compleat. O my dear brethren in Christ, what think you of these words, Luke xxii. 15. With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.—Christ's desires were strong desires, his cries were strong cries, his sweat was strong sweat, mingled with blood falling down to the ground. Luke 44. Alas, my brethren, we follow Christ, but it is too much like Peter, afar off. Mat. xxvi. 58. Have we not great reason to rent our garments of divers colours, Tamar like. 2. Sam. xiii. 19. Because of our spiritual whoredoms. O how cold are our hearts, how cold our prayers, how faint our desires, not worthy to be so much as once named, when compared with the desires of those worthies that are gone before us to heaven, and are now in glory. The time was, when once they, like us, were in this vain world, and in vile bodies of sin and death ; but they have passed over this sea of glass, mingled with fire. Rev. xv. 2. They have gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image ; and though the church militant upon earth are still sailing towards the harbour of eternal rest,

test, this is their comfort, they are all under one great head, and they have the same mighty power of God engaged in their behalf, that was engaged in the behalf of all the saints that are now around the throne; and altho' we may breakfast and dine in the low room, ere long we shall hear that voice sound in our ears. Rev. xxi. 9. Come up hither, to have a full view of the bride, the Lamb's wife in glory, for we shall sup in the higher house, and Christ shall sup with us. Rev. iii. 20. My dear hearers, does not your hearts feel warm at the thoughts of so much mercy, grace, and glory ? does it not revive you to think, Well, I may be poor and despised in this world, but what signifieth all this short and perishing affair ? I am a child of God, and under his kind and tender care, and I cannot fail because he cannot. I am an heir of God, and a joint heir with Christ Jesus my elder brother, and none can take my inheritance from me. Jesus is my friend in need, and friend indeed, who so loved me as to shed his precious blood for me, and will he suffer my cause to be lost ? No, dread to indulge the thought one single moment, for it is dishonouring to God, and hurtful to the christian's peace.

God help us to dwell upon the pleasing theme—God in Christ is love, who has made us kings and priests unto himself, that we might reign with him and with one another for ever, Rev. i. 6. Made us kings, not of this world, for what signifies all this short and perishing affair,—our kingdom is durable and lasting, it is the gift of God, Luke xii. 32. Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom ; we are priests, and therefore made holy ; in short, all things are ours that are worth having, because Christ is ours, and we are his, and both are for ever united unto God, 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23. A soul-ravishing and Christ-exalting theme, God help us to dwell upon it more and more ! I have read of one of the late Kings of England that made his will, in which

he left to his Queen, “ all between the heavens and the earth, and under the earth, all the mines and minerals, with every part and parcel thereof.”—But the great apostle Paul shews us a more extensive will, 2 Cor. iii. 22. All things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; *all are yours.*

Add to this the crown that is laid up not only for Paul, but for all that love the appearing of precious Christ, 2 Tim. iv. 8. who gives this crown, with this four-fold motto upon it,—a crown of righteousness, a crown of glory, a crown of life, a crown of immortality. And what think you, my dear brethren, sure we shall have a majestic walk one day with the robe of Christ’s righteousness on, this four-fold crown on our heads, a palm in one hand, and a sceptre in the other? Surely we shall outshine the very angels in heaven, and sing a note that angels never can,—and it is this, To him that loved and washed us in his own blood, Rev. i. 5. For the Lord hath chosen Zion: he hath desired it for his habitation.

Thus far by way of introduction. I come now to the words of my text.

This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell, for I have desired it.

The words of my text, which I have chose for this day, and upon the present, and to me pleasing occasion, furnish us with the three following things, viz.

1st The Lord’s declaration.—This is my rest.

2dly His condescension, or promise.—Here will I dwell.

3dly The reason of it.—He hath desired it.

The sum is this, God rests in Zion: God dwells in Zion: God hath desired it.

At the opening of this New Chapel, called Albion, May the good Lord open our hearts as he did the heart of Lydia, Acts. xvi. 14. Open our eyes, open our ears,

ears, open our understandings, open the scriptures, and open my mouth, unloose my tongue, enlarge my poor heart, give believing views of precious Christ, and warm affection, that I may have a single eye, an honest heart, and the Lord present. O my dear brethren, help me, help me, with your prayers to God for me, that when I speak to the ear, God would be pleased to send his holy spirit to accompany his own word, with his divine blessing, and carry it home with power upon all our hearts, that it may be as good seed sown into good ground; that the net may be conducted to the right side of the ship; that there may be a great draught of fishes; then shall we say with Peter. John xxi. 7. It is the Lord, and to him be all the praise.

1st, The Lord's declaration, This is my rest for ever. Rest in scripture signifieth, 1st, Ceasing from labour, Exod. v. 5. And Pharaoh said, Behold, the people of the land now are many, and you make them rest from their burdens. chap. xxxv. 2. A sabbath of rest to the Lord; but 2dly, A respite from wars and hostilities, Joshua xiv. 15. And the land had rest from war. 3dly, Tranquillity of spirit; confidence in the promises of God. Psal. cxvi. 7. Return unto thy rest, O my soul. But 4thly, The church of God, wherein Christ rested by his love and grace, Isaiah. xi. 10. And in that day, there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious, or glory. By Christ resting in his people, and their resting in him, there ariseth that peace with God and their own consciences, which believers do enjoy in this world, having the love of God shed abroad in their hearts, by the holy ghost. Rom. v. 5. Witnessing their reconciliation, justification, renovation, and adoption, so as they rejoice in hope of the glory of God, here they find rest to their souls. Matt. xi. 29. And by virtue of their union to Jesus Christ. Jesus gives

them faith, for he is the author of it, Heb. xii. 2. And the finisher thereof too, and by their being enabled to lay hold of Christ in his word and ordinances, they enter into this rest; for we, saith the Apostle, which have believed, do enter into rest. Heb. iv. 3. God is said to rest from his works; and on the seventh day God ended his work, which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day, from all his work, which he had made. Gen. ii. 2. Compared with Heb. iv. 4. That is, after God had perfected the invisible and visible world, on the review of all his works, finding them very good, he was satisfied, in all these discoveries of his own perfections, in the works of his hands. God always enjoyed his own blessedness, even from eternity. There is an admirable passage in Zephaniah, iii. 17. Let all that are in Albion chapel this day, hear it:

The Lord thy God in the midst of thee, is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy, he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing. Our God is mighty to save, mighty to deliver, mighty to protect, and while there is might in God, to save thee, it is impossible thou canst be lost; but tho' God be mighty, what is all that? I know he is mighty, but will he save me? that is the question? Yea, he will, he will rejoice over thee with joy, over thee, poor heart, that is often writing bitter things against thyself, over thee, who art barring thyself out of heaven, out of the promises, and out of Christ, and all, saying, these are not for me, they are for others, but not for me. All the curses in the bible I can take, and claim them all, but not one promise, and how can God rejoice over me, unless it be in my damnation! Yea, God can rejoice over thee, to bless thee, and do thee good, seeing he hath received compleat satisfaction from Jesus Christ, who is thy surety, poor doubting, cast-down soul; whose sins appear of a crimson dye, and of a scarlet colour; and what is more, you

are

are often afraid you will die in them, and so never see the land that flows with milk and honey; and will God look upon such a sinful heap of dust as I am, who am not worthy to live, nor move upon this earth. Come, come, let us hear the worst of your case, for it is not good to keep Satan's secrets. O the sore trials that the children of God pass thro'. I think I hear one saying, O the dreadful thoughts that pass thro' my mind; I am tempted to blaspheme the name of the God of heaven; and this is not all, but, O dreadful to relate, I am tempted to *felo de se*, to put an end to my own life, and at night, I say, Would to God it was morning, and in the morning, Would to God it was night. Deut. xxviii. 67. So that I can say with Job, When I think that my bed will ease me, and I find rest upon my couch, then he terrifieth me through night visions, and scares me with dreams! O poor tossed soul, thou art in deep waters, the arrows of the Almighty stick fast in thee, and drink up thy spirits; and will God rejoice over me?—Yea, over thee, I say, over thee. Look upon my text once more,—it is not the word of a man, no, it is the word of the living God. This is my rest for ever:—Here will I dwell, for I have desired it. To you, my fellow Christians, I say to you, who are thus tossed with tempest, and not comforted. Isaiah liv. 11. I say to thee, God will lay thy stones with fair colours, and thy foundations with sapphires.

My beloved brethren, I can tell you from experience, for your comfort, that I have been in these deep waters, where the billows have gone over me; these I have felt, and handled. I can say, in some measure, I am not ignorant of Satan's devices; and if this little tract fall into the hands of any such tempted, tried, cast-down, weeping, mourning souls, let them remember they are not alone; for I know you will be often thinking you are alone, your's is a singular case; sure never any were so tempted as I am. Yea, many thousands

thousands have, that are now in glory, for there has not, nor can there any temptation befall you, but such as is common to man. 1 Cor. x. 13. But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able to bear, but will with the temptation make a way for your escape, that ye may be able to bear it. God often reveals himself to his dear tempted ones, in the furnace of affliction, Isaiah xlviii. 10. Sometimes God's dear ones think, and say, they are cast away: no, it is not so, God hath said it, and will stand to it, Isaiah xli. 9. I have chosen thee, and will not cast thee away; God says of you, Zech. iii. 2. Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire. Cast down, you may be, but destroyed you never shall; persecuted you may be, but forsaken you never shall be. 2 Cor. iv. 9. So long as God is God, and remains unchangeable. Mal. iii. 6. The Lord changeth not, & it is for this reason we are not consumed; we are changeable creatures, but the Lord is always the same. Heb. xiii. 8.

Before I dismiss this head, permit me to remind you, my dearly beloved in the Lord, of that precious part of God's word, which you have upon record, in that sweet evangelical prophet Isaiah, chap. l. 10. Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God. Mark these words well. First, they fear the Lord. Secondly, they obey the voice of his servant; this is Christ, for as man mediator, he was God's servant. Isaiah xlvi. 1. Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth, I have put my spirit upon him, he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles. Thirdly, they walk at times in darkness, and have no light, that is, no blazing light. Fourthly, let such stay himself upon his God, his God still, his God in the dark, as well as in the light, his God when under temptations. His God in the furnace, his God in the waters, his

his God in life, his God in death, his God at the day of judgment, his God to all eternity. His God who has chosen him, and will never leave, nor forsake him. Heb. xiii. 5. I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. This is my rest for ever:—Here will I dwell, for I have desired it.

Which brings me to the second head, viz.

2dly. The Lord's condescension. Here will I dwell for ever. King Solomon in his solemn prayer, at the dedication of the temple, cries out, 1 Kings viii. 27. But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, cannot contain thee, how much less this house that I have built? The wisest man was lost in wonder at the Lord's goodness, that he should dwell with man upon earth!

1. God is said to dwell in the heavens, Psalm cxxiii. 1. I will lift up mine eyes unto thee, O Lord, that dwellest in the heavens! God hath a certain and glorious place where he resideth, even the highest heavens, where he is clothed with infinite power and majesty, and from whence he beholdeth and governeth this lower world, and all things that are therein. His gracious presence with his people on earth, is signified by dwelling with them, Psalm ix. 11. Sing praises to the Lord, which dwelleth in Zion: declare among the people his doings. "Where the ark was, which was the symbol of his special and gracious presence." And in Isaiah lvii. 15. For this saith the High and Lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.

2. Christ's manifesting himself in the flesh. The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, John i. 14. Also his spiritual abode in every faithful soul, Eph. iii. 17. The apostle prayed that Christ might dwell in the hearts of his beloved people, at Ephesus, by

by faith, even so, my dearly beloved brethren, of Leeds, in Albion-Chapel. I pray God that Christ may dwell in you by his merit, to justify you ; by his grace and Spirit, to renew and purify you ; by his power, to keep you ; by his wisdom, to lead you, and instruct you ; and by his communion, and compassion, to share with you in all your troubles. In all your afflictions, O believer, he is afflicted, inasmuch as you are the members of his body, Isaiah Ixiii. 9. The Holy Ghost, who dwells in the soul by his gracious operations, working faith, love, and patience ; these are they that are in the spirit not in the flesh. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, seeing the Spirit of God dwelleth in you, Rom. viii. 9. Therefore the Christian can never be alone. Said Beza, " I bear about in me the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." The word of God also dwells in God's people, not in a poor, lean, barren, and miserable way, as if God left his children in the Spirit, as vagabonds leave their's in the flesh, to be half starved. The word of God dwells in the heart. I have hid thy word, said David, not in the chest, no more to be looked on until next Lord's day, as is the case of those who lay aside their bibles with their sabbath-day cloaths ; I have hid thy word, not upon some lonely shelf, to be buried in dust, or covered over with a winding-sheet of the spider's weaving. No, no ! David hid the word of God in his heart, Psalm cxix. 11. The word may be said to dwell in God's dear people, when it is diligently studied, firmly believed, and carefully practised. May the word dwell richly in you, in all wisdom, Col. iii. 16. Where God dwells, faith dwells in the heart ; hope dwells as an anchor of the soul ; where God dwells there is prayer, reading, and praise ; where God dwells, there is light, life, and gospel-liberty : O that the God of heaven and earth may thus dwell in your hearts ! that every heart here to-day may be a Bethel for God to dwell in ! Dwell in Albion-

Albion-Chapel, according to the words of my text, Here will I dwell for ever: for I have desired it. Dwell here, to bless you and yours. Dwell here, to bless Zion. Dwell here, to bless Albion-Chapel, to bless your minister, to bless him when in his private studies, to bless him in reading, in meditating, in praying, in preaching; that he may find the Lord present, speak boldly and feelingly, in the name of Jesus. Dwell here, to bless abundantly our provision, (i. e.) the word and ordinance, so that sinners may be converted, saints edified, and built up for glory; that you may come to your graves, as corn that is fully ripe. Dwell here, to satisfy Albion's poor with bread, even the poor in spirit, who are heirs of the kingdom of God, Mat. v. 8. Who are hungering, and thirsting after righteousness, longing after Christ, thirsting after his word; these God hath promised to satisfy with bread, ver. 15. with the bread of life, even Jesus Christ, for he is the true bread that came down from heaven, John vi. 51, 58. The living bread; the more you eat of this bread, the more you will desire to eat; for you know, my brethren, we have in general bread three, four, or five times a day, and yet we never grow weary of it. This strengtheneth the heart, it makes the face to shine. Psalm civ. 15. This bread will keep men alive for ever, John vi. 51. If any man eat of this, he shall live for ever. Dwell here, to cloath her priests with salvation, cloath the ministers of the gospel with salvation, by enabling them to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lust thereof, Rom. xiii. 14. By putting him on in their minds, memories, and consciences, and being cloathed with humility, for God resisteth the proud; but he giveth grace to the humble. Jam. iv. 6. 1 Peter v. 5. May my very dear brother, who labours here, be thus adorned, and by being so, you will adorn the doctrines of the everlasting Gospel. Tit. ii. 10. Then

the consequence will be, the Saints will shout aloud for joy. The mouths of enemies will be stopt, or at least, they have no just cause to reproach the good ways of our dear blessed Lord Jesus Christ.

That Christ may dwell here in all his offices, and characters. Prophet to cure your ignorance, priest who has atoned for your guilt, a king to rule, govern, and defend you by his laws ; to be eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, ears to the deaf, a physician to the sick, raiment to the naked, food to the hungry ; your sun to enlighten, your shield to defend, to give grace here, and glory hereafter, Psalm lxxxiv. 11. The star that breaks the night of ignorance, blindness of mind, hardness of heart. The door by which you enter in, your captain to lead you, to teach your hands to war, and your fingers to fight the good fight of faith, Psalm clxiv. 1. 1 Tim. vi. 12. Lay hold of salvation, to furnish you with the whole christian armour. The helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, and never expect a truce, with either the world, the flesh, nor the devil, but fight under the blood-stained banner of the Captain of your Salvation until the last gasp, never putting off your armour until you lay down your head upon the pillow, and give up the ghost. And for your encouragement, you are sure of victory ; that is, the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith, 1 John v. 4. And we are conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him that loved us, Romans viii. 37.

“ March on, nor fear to win the day,
 “ Tho’ death and hell obstruct the way ;
 “ For Satan trembles when he sees,
 “ A feeble saint upon his knees.”

This is my rest for ever : Here will I dwell, for I have desired it.

3dly,

3dly, The Lord's desire to reside in it. Not but the Lord is every where; for in his own word, and for the encouragement of his dear people, he is present every where, wherever two or three are gathered together in his name, Mat. xviii. 20. And in all places where he records his name, he has promised to come unto them, and bless them. Exod. xx. 24. Wherever his people meet, at Jerusalem, there the Lord is, at Antioch, there he is, in Asia, there he is, in Africa, there he is, in America, there he is, in the Islands of the South Sea, there he is, in London, there he is, in Leeds, there he is, in Albion-Chapel, there he is. —O my beloved brethren, this shews the divinity of our dear Lord Jesus, he is every where, and his eyes run to and fro, as a flaming fire in the earth, beholding the evil and the good. Prov. xv. 3.—I have desired it.

Desire is, First, longing, or wishing, as in 1. Sam, xxiii. 20. O King, come down according to all the desire of thy soul.

Secondly, the prayer, request or longing of the soul after some spiritual good thing, of which it is in want. Psal. cxlv. 19. This God has promised to fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them.

Love or affection, Song of Solomon Chap. vii. 10. I am my beloved's, and his desire is towards me. Also hope or expectation. And on whom is all the desire of Jesus? is it not on thee, and on all thy father's house.

The Lord Jesus Christ, is called by the prophet Haggai, chap. ii. 7. The desire of all nations, who shall come, and he will fill this house with his glory, saith the Lord of Hosts. O that the desire of all nations may be your desire, and that he would fill your hearts, and mine, more and more, with all joy and peace, in believing in him, who is the desire of every heaven-born soul, and who desires to dwell with us in this place. O christian, though thou art black in thyself

as the tents of Kedar, yet thou art comely in the Lord's sight, through his comeliness, which he has, does, and shall put upon thee. Why art thou looking upon thy blackness, when the Lord does not look upon it?—Hear what he saith of thee, Cant. iv. 7. Thou art all fair, there is no spot in thee! Satan will tell thee that there are many spots in thee; thy own relations will tell thee there are many spots in thee; and thy own heart will tell thee that there are many spots in thee: but the Lord declares thou art all fair, there is not one spot in thee. All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, Psalm xlvi. 8. By reason of the Lord's desire towards thee. Dearly beloved, let me beseech thee in the word of the Lord, ver. 10. Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget thine own people, according to the flesh, and thy father's house, old Adam. ver. 11. So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty, for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him. Who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, whom God has set upon his holy hill of Zion, Psalm ii. 6. Who is worshipped by angels, and all the saints that are in glory; and who greatly desired to dwell with you upon earth; who came from heaven to earth, that he might raise you from earth to heaven, that you might reign with him for ever. The Lord had such a desire to dwell with his people, that he laid aside his glory for a season, or emptied himself of his glory; came down to earth, to relieve us from the bondage of sin and misery; though he was surrounded with angels, and had their melodious notes sounding in his ears, yet for all this he came to relieve us. With reverence be it said, Jesus could not find a match in heaven, among all the heavenly host of angels, to match himself with, but he came to earth to match himself with sinful mortals. See what wonderful expressions he used in the scriptures.—Thy Maker

is thy husband, Isaiah liv. 5. The Lord of Hosts is his name ; the God of the whole earth shall he be called ; he hath desired it. I never read of any such expressions, used by Christ to angels, as these, and that other word, Cant. iv. 9. Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse, with one of thine eyes. The words are strong indeed, and might be read, Thou hast unhearted me ; thou hast stolen away my heart ; thou hast overcome me. No wonder then, though the kingdom of heaven suffer violence, when the King himself suffers violence. O how fair is thy love, thou dear spouse of the dear Redeemer ! How much better than wine ! O thou sister of precious Christ ! thou art perfumed with all the powders of the merchant ; the King has made a chariot for thee, chap. iii. 10. It is paved with love for the daughter of Jerusalem, for the daughters of Zion, for the daughters of Albion-Chapel.—All hail, highly favoured, the Lord is with thee ; the Lord is in thee ; the Lord is in this place, for my text saith—he hath desired it.

And of Zion it shall be said, this and that man was born in her : and the highest himself shall establish her. Psalm lxxxvii. 5, 6. The Lord shall count when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there ; and I hope when the great day shall come, God will have many that shall be born even here, in this place ; here in Albion-Chapel, in Leeds, who shall reign with Christ in yonder happy regions—in yonder happy mansions which Christ has prepared for you, and is gone before you to take possession of ; and he will come again to receive you, that where he is, there you may be also, John xiv. 3. The Lord Christ so desires to have his dear blood-bought purchase with him, that he will not inhabit glory without them. No ! they must and shall reign with him,

him, and with one another for ever :—as in the words of my text—he hath desired it.

O how will his glory shine forth in that day, when that word, 2 Thess. i. 10. shall be fulfilled, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe ! with what uncreated rays will his glory shine forth at that day ? when the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, the sun become black as sackcloth of hair, the moon become as blood, the stars fall from heaven, as the leaves from the fig-tree, when the rocks shall be on fire, when the earth shall be burnt up, when there shall be no more sea, when the graves shall yield up their charge ! Then, then shall we lift up our heads with joy, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be ever with the Lord !—For he hath desired it.

Seeing God hath laid up such things for us as these, yea, and ten thousand times more, for eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of the wisest man upon earth so much as to conceive, the things that God hath reserved in heaven for us. 1 Cor. ii. 9.

Nay, and ought we not at all times of our deepest distress, to cry out with David, Psal. xlvi. 5. Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted in me ; hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

“ How can I sink with such a prop,

“ Which bears the world and all things up.”

His faithfulness is engaged in my behalf, his oath is engaged in my behalf, I cannot fail, because he cannot, for God cannot lie, nor deceive me, therefore it must be so ; my happiness is as sure as if I were now in the full possession of it ; because God hath promised me that it is, and I know his word, his promise cannot fail, — he shall as soon cease to be God, as one of his promises to me shall fail ! Did Pontius Pilate say to the Jews, What I have written, I have written ? and he would not alter

alter it, though a man, no: And when Isaac had blessed Jacob, who came to him by subtilty, with the skins of the kids about his neck, and upon his hands, Gen. xxvii. 33. I have blessed him, yea, and he shall be blessed; and did Isaac, a man, stand to what he had done, and would not alter it, and shall God alter it? No, he will not, he cannot, his word is more sure than the laws of the Medes and Persians, it altereth not. And this is my mercy; for I do not look upon my promises as any thing, but God's promise to me; which is unchangeable, and who hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. Heb. xiii. 5.—Neither does my happiness depend upon my frames and feelings; it is comfortable to be in a comfortable frame of spirit, and to enjoy the beatific presence, and blessing of God; but this I know, that whether I see the sun in the firmament or not, at all times, yet I know he is there. But some may say, if you are sure of happiness, then you may live as you list. No, no, it is my desire to serve God, and glorify his holy name in my soul and body, which are his: in the words of my text,—he hath desired it. Being delivered, I desire to serve him according to his own will, without fear. Luke i. 74. That is, without slavish fear, that leads to bondage; but with a holy reverential fear before God, all the days of my life; because he hath desired it. To shun even the appearance of evil,—because he hath desired it; to follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. Heb. xiii. 14. Because my Lord has desired it. For my own part, I for ever exclaim against human merit,—I know when I have done all, I am but an unprofitable servant, and drawing near my blessed Lord, I see so much sin mixed with all I do, that were I to have heaven for a single good thought, unless God by his spirit work that good thought in me, I am sure I could not have it; for the Lord hath declared in his word —We are not sufficient of ourselves to think

think a good thought, nor speak a good word. Cor. iii. 5, 6. But my sufficiency is of God; and my desires are to walk agreeable to the gospel of Christ.

And I add, it is but vain for any man, or woman, to talk about free grace, unless that grace has made them free; and wherever I see a person that talks much and does not act agreeable thereto, it brings to my mind that part of God's word. Lev. xi. 5. They chew the cud; but they do not divide the hoof,—they talk about the word, cry up free grace; but do not part with their old sins: Therefore they are unclean.

My earnest desire is, that they that have believed, be careful to maintain good works. Tit. iii. 8. These things are good and profitable unto men, and evidences of faith in Jesus Christ; for where there is fire, there will be heat, and where the sun is, there is light; and where true faith is, it will be fruitful: It will be productive of its own evidences.

Christians, see to it then that ye walk circumspetly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Eph. v. 15, 16. Remember the eyes of God are on you, the eyes of angels are on you, the eyes of the church are on you, the eyes of wicked men are on you, and the eyes of devils are on you.

Here God hath said he will dwell—for he hath desired it; and may you also, my beloved brethren, dwell with God, dwell in Christ, and Christ in you, while here upon earth, and when your work is done, dwell for ever with Christ in Heaven.

For God is gone up with a shout, and will come again with the sound of a trumpet. Psal. xlvii. 5, 6. Sing praises, sing praises, praise to our King, sing ye

God of his infinite mercy, bless his word, and abundantly bless you, in your souls and bodies, which are his, and to him be all the praise. Amen.

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